CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. A tensioner for tensioning a drive belt, comprising:
a housing having a generally open lower end;
a first connector on the housing;
a shaft disposed within the housing;
an arm having first and second ends and a second connector on the first end that is cooperable with the first connector to attach the arm to the housing;
a bearing disposed within the housing and connected with the shaft and the housing so that the housing is rotatable relative to the shaft;
a reversible biasing element disposed within the housing operable in first and second orientations, wherein in the first orientation the biasing element is displaceable in a first direction to bias the arm in a preferred direction and wherein in the second orientation the preferred direction is reversed ~~wherein in the first orientation the biasing element biases the arm in a clockwise direction and in the second orientation the biasing element biases the arm in a counter-clockwise direction~~; and
an indicator operable to indicate ~~indicating~~ the preferred direction ~~of the bias of the biasing element~~ when the biasing element is in a relaxed state.

2. The tensioner of claim 1 wherein the indicator is cooperable with a portion of the biasing element.

3. The tensioner of claim 1 wherein the indicator is reversible.

4. The tensioner of claim 3 wherein the indicator comprises a button having a characteristic indicative of the direction of the bias of the biasing element.

5. The tensioner of claim 1 wherein the indicator is connectable to the housing in a first orientation to indicate that the biasing element is operable to bias the arm in a clockwise direction and a second orientation to indicate the biasing element is operable to bias the arm in a counter-clockwise direction.

6. The tensioner of claim 5 wherein the indicator is cooperable with a portion of the biasing element such that the biasing element impedes connection of the indicator to the housing in the first orientation when the biasing element is in the second orientation.

7. The tensioner of claim 6 wherein the indicator is cooperable with a portion of the biasing element such that the biasing element impedes connection of the indicator to the housing in the second orientation when the biasing element is in the first orientation.

8. The tensioner of claim 1 wherein the indicator comprises a connector for connecting the indicator to the housing.

9. The tensioner of claim 8 wherein the indicator comprises a lock for locking the indicator to the housing.

10. The tensioner of claim 1 wherein the biasing element comprises a wound torsion spring having a plurality of convolutions.

11. The tensioner of claim 1 wherein the biasing element has a first end releasably connected with the housing and a second end releasably connected with a base.

12. The tensioner of claim 11 wherein the housing has a lower edge confronting the base and the housing is spaced apart from the base to create a gap between the base and the housing.

13. The tensioner of claim 11 wherein the base comprises a hub forming a socket configured to receive the shaft.

14. The tensioner of claim 1 wherein the bearing has an outer race fixedly attached to the housing and an inner race fixedly attached to the shaft.

15. The tensioner of claim 1 wherein the housing comprises a base attached to a lower portion of the housing and the first connector is configured to allow the arm to be attached to or detached from the housing without detaching the housing and the base.

16. The tensioner of claim 1 comprising a pulley attached to the arm that is configured to cooperate with the belt.

17. A tensioner for tensioning a drive belt, comprising:

a housing having a first connector on the housing;

an arm having a second connector that is cooperable with the first connector to attach the arm to the housing;

a reversible biasing element disposed within the housing operable in first and second orientations, wherein in the first orientation the biasing element <u>is displaceable in a first direction to bias the arm in a preferred direction and wherein in the second orientation the preferred direction is reversed</u> ~~biases the arm in a clockwise direction and in the second orientation the biasing element biases the arm in a counter-clockwise direction~~; and

an indicator operable to indicate ~~indicating~~ the preferred direction ~~of the bias of the biasing element~~ when the biasing element is in a relaxed state.

18. The tensioner of claim 17 comprising a bearing disposed within the housing and connected with the shaft and the housing so that the housing is rotatable relative to the shaft;

19. The tensioner of claim 17 wherein the indicator is cooperable with a portion of the biasing element.

20. The tensioner of claim 17 wherein the indicator is reversible.

21. The tensioner of claim 17 wherein the indicator comprises a button having a characteristic indicative of the direction of the bias of the biasing element.

22. The tensioner of claim 17 wherein the indicator is connectable to the housing in a first orientation to indicate that the biasing element is operable to bias the arm in a clockwise direction and a second orientation to indicate the biasing element is operable to bias the arm in a counter-clockwise direction.

23. The tensioner of claim 22 wherein the indicator is cooperable with a portion of the biasing element such that the biasing element impedes connection of the indicator to the housing in the first orientation when the biasing element is in the second orientation.

24. The tensioner of claim 23 wherein the indicator is cooperable with a portion of the biasing element such that the biasing element impedes connection of the

indicator to the housing in the second orientation when the biasing element is in the first orientation.

25. The tensioner of claim 17 wherein the indicator comprises a connector for connecting the indicator to the housing.

26. The tensioner of claim 25 wherein the indicator comprises a lock for locking the indicator to the housing.

27. The tensioner of claim 17 wherein the biasing element comprises a wound torsion spring having a plurality of convolutions.

28. The tensioner of claim 17 wherein the biasing element has a first end releasably connected with the housing and a second end releasably connected with a base.

29. The tensioner of claim 28 wherein the housing has a lower edge confronting the base and the housing is spaced apart from the base to create a gap between the base and the housing.

30. The tensioner of claim 28 wherein the base comprises a hub forming a socket configured to receive a shaft.

31. The tensioner of claim 30 wherein the bearing has an outer race fixedly attached to the housing and an inner race fixedly attached to the shaft.

32. The tensioner of claim 17 wherein the housing comprises a base attached to a lower portion of the housing and the first connector is configured to allow the arm

to be attached to or detached from the housing without detaching the housing and the base.

33. The tensioner of claim 17 comprising a pulley attached to the arm that is configured to cooperate with the belt.

34. A method for tensioning a belt, comprising the steps of:
providing a base having a shaft;
attaching a biasing element to the base in one of a first orientation in which the torsion spring is operable to provide a biasing force in a first direction or a second orientation in which the torsion spring is operable to provide a biasing force in a second direction;
providing a housing;
attaching the housing to the base and the spring so that the housing encloses the biasing element and the biasing element is operable to provide a torsional force to bias the housing relative to the base;
releasably attaching an arm to the housing or the base so that the arm can be detached from the housing or the base without detaching the housing from the base;
attaching a pulley to the arm; and
operating an indicator to identify whether the biasing element is disposed in the first orientation or the second orientation.

35. The method of claim 34 comprising the steps of:
rotating the housing in a first direction relative to the base so that the biasing element provides a torsional force biasing element in a direction opposite the first direction; and

moving the pulley into contact with a belt after rotating the housing relative to the base so that the torsional force tensions the belt.

36. The method of claim 35 wherein the step of attaching the housing to the base comprises attaching the housing to the base so that a gap is formed between the base and the housing.

37. The method of claim 35 wherein the step of attaching the housing to the base comprises also attaching the base to a machine.

38. The method of claim 35 comprising the step of detaching the arm from either the housing or the base without removing the housing from the base.